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Letter dated 5 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I am attaching herewith an official response from my Government to the report of the Group of Experts to the Security Council issued on 18 July 2006 (S/2006/525).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Francis K. **Butagira**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 8 September 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Official response of the Government of Uganda to the report of the Group of Experts on the United Nations arms embargo on the Democratic Republic of the Congo issued on 18 July 2006

1. Regarding the accusation by the Group of Experts that the Government of Uganda:

(a) Did not grant them access to the arms and ammunition factory at Nakasongola (para. 41);

(b) Did not permit the Group of Experts to visit the military airport (para. 120);

An invitation letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs was dispatched to the Chairman of the United Nations sanctions Committee as follow up to the meeting which the two held on 23 May 2006 in New York.

2. Concerning the accusations by the Group of Experts that the Government of Uganda has not heeded the requests of the Experts for air traffic records (para. 120):

The fact of the matter is that the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) provided 1 megabyte of data to MONUC under the Group's air traffic control expert. The data contained the routing of aircraft, the dates of their operations, countries of destination and details of occurrences.

CAA regrets available at present any other information that the Group of Experts requires. CAA also welcomes a visit by the Group of Experts, as before, to obtain the information from the computerized database at CAA headquarters.

3. With regard to accusations by the Group of Experts that Uganda is harbouring numerous Congolese rebels in Kampala (para. 193) and that the Government of Uganda is not giving the Group of Experts information about measures taken against people or entities subject to the United Nations financial and travel sanctions (para. 215):

The Government is not aware of the presence of Congolese rebels in Kampala. In September 2005, the Government of Uganda initiated a joint mission between JOINT, the military intelligence officials of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with the participation of MONUC, which found no existence or operation of Congolese rebels in Uganda. The Government has in the past dealt firmly with Congolese militia who crossed to Uganda by declaring them persona non grata and expelling them. However, the Government would appreciate it if the Group of Experts could provide it with any specific information as to the exact locations of such rebels so that action can be taken against them.

The Government does not condone the use of its territory to undermine regional security and stability. The Government wishes to seize this opportunity to once again call on the Government of the Democratic of the Congo and MONUC to

neutralize the Ugandan negative forces operating out of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, namely ADF/NALU, FRA and LRA.

7. **With respect to the accusation by the Group of Experts about the unwillingness of the Government of Uganda to allow the Group of Experts to meet the MRC rebels arrested in Uganda (para. 192):**

The Government of Uganda wishes to clarify that the Experts made the request which they admitted was based on press reports. Besides, the request came as a by-the-way and was not part of the agenda which had been specified in the correspondence announcing their visit. The Group of Experts made the request in the evening and was leaving the country the following day and, therefore, could not give the Government time to verify the press reports and create appointments with the authorities responsible for policy and process.

Once again, the Group of Experts made this accusation in bad faith and the Government of Uganda takes exception.

8. **On the accusation by the Group of Experts that the Government of Uganda gave the Group of Experts documentation that rarely responds to specific requirements (para. 205):**

The Government of Uganda has always provided prompt, accurate and substantive responses to questions posed by the Group of Experts. However, for reasons best known to the Group of Experts, the Experts have often opted to disregard Government of Uganda responses and instead claim that there are gaps, perhaps to fulfil a prolongation of their mandate.

Otherwise, as in the past, the Government of Uganda remains available to provide any information that may be requested by the Group of Experts. Government officials will keep their doors open for visits and dedicated discussions with the Group of Experts.

Often, the Group of Experts comes in a hurry and is not willing to spend sufficient time in Uganda to examine the data available to it.

9. **Regarding the accusation of the Group of Experts that the Government of Uganda presented an inflammatory and unjustified position (para. 207):**

The Government of Uganda believes that that is mere interpretation by the Group of Experts, which it is entitled to. The fact of the matter is that the Government of Uganda has always and will continue to cooperate with and support the work of the United Nations, including the Group of Experts, on the arms embargo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Government of Uganda will continue to provide any information requested by the Group of Experts because we have nothing to hide. The Government of Uganda also believes that it deserves respect from the Group of Experts, which has hitherto treated Uganda in an unbecoming manner.

7. **Regarding Air Navette, a Congolese registered company operating flights out of Entebbe said to be carrying arms:**

The Government of Uganda wishes to clarify that goods that Air Navette air freights are always subjected to Customs inspection, and the Uganda Revenue Authority has found no evidence of arms in Air Navette cargo.

The accusation that Air Navette flies to non-Customs areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can best be addressed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which registered this company and which controls the Congolese territory.

8. **Concerning the capacity of Uganda's immigration services:**

The Government is doing everything possible to enhance the capacity, including the ongoing recruitment of more personnel to man the gazetted immigration posts.

However, the long and porous borders continue to pose a challenge not only along the Uganda-Democratic Republic of the Congo border but along all border lines between Uganda and her other neighbours and this is not a problem unique to Uganda alone.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

September 2006